

# Officials discuss redistricting plans

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**LAFAYETTE** — Elected officials from across Acadiana asked that existing relationships not be split when the Legislature begins its task of redistricting in line with 2010 Census counts.

Leaders in Iberia and St. Martin parishes work well together — like a pair of gloves, Iberia Parish Tax Assessor Rickey Huval said.

“We hate to throw one of them away,” Huval joked.

Huval was one of 26 elected officials and residents who testified at a public hearing held Tuesday to assist legislators in the redistricting process.

Legislators meet in a special session on March 20 to begin the business of redrawing election districts for Congress, state House and Senate, state Public Service Commission, state Board of Elementary and Secondary Education and state Supreme Court and state Courts of Appeal.

Lafayette leaders touted the area’s “organic growth” as reason to create more Lafayette-centric districts at the state level. Lafayette Parish is now home to 31,075 more residents, according to growth charted between the

2000 and 2010 census counts.

“I think we’re an area of the state that’s clearly growing,” Lafayette City-Parish President Joey Durel said.

Lafayette Parish has three House seats and one Senate seat wholly contained in Lafayette. Those seats should grow based on the fact that Lafayette is “population hub” for the Acadiana area, said Paula Carson, chairwoman of the Lafayette Economic Development Authority.

The public hearings began earlier this month and continue through March 1. Earlier Tuesday, the committee held a meeting in Lake Charles.

The state will lose one of its seven seats in Congress because Louisiana’s overall population didn’t keep pace with other states.

A push to maintain Congressional District 7, which includes Lake Charles and Lafayette, was a common plea during the Lake Charles meeting, said state Rep. Rick Gallo, chairman of the House and Governmental Affairs Committee.

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[http://house.louisiana.gov/H\\_Redistricting2011](http://house.louisiana.gov/H_Redistricting2011) or <http://senate.legis.state.la.us/redist2011>